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ABSTRACT

Elderhostel is a national network of one-week college-level courses offered in summer on the campuses of universities, colleges, and junior colleges. It is designed primarily for persons over 60 and their spouses. Begun as an experimental effort by five New Hampshire colleges in the summer of 1975, it has been operating in Iowa since 1977. Iowa Elderhostel has proved to be a mixture. Courses include those in creative writing, history, contemporary issues, ethnic history, opera, solar energy, and contemporary art. Extracurricular activities are also provided. Enrollees have ranged in academic background from persons who never attended high school to those with advanced degrees. The program cuts across economic lines--incomes range from under $6,000 to over $30,000. Participants' evaluations mention these benefits: fellowship, intellectual stimulation, and quality of instruction and instructors. Instructors enjoy the students, and the program acts as a public relations event for the cooperating educational institutions. Funding has come from Title I of the Higher Education Act, Northwestern Bell Telephone Company, Iowa Arts Council, Iowa Board for Public Programs in the Humanities, and Iowa Foundation. Participants also pay a charge, and some scholarships are available. (Addresses for the national headquarters and Iowa Elderhostel are provided. Other attachments include a map of Iowa Elderhostel institutions, participants' profile, and table of national growth.) (YLB)

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ELDERHOSTEL

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A report

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NOTE: Except where otherwise indicated, the italicized paragraphs in red on the following pages present excerpts from evaluations of ELDERHOSTEL by persons who took part as students.

Cover picture used by permission of the Cedar Rapids Gazette.

IOWA ELDERHOSTEL

Continuing Education for Persons over Age 60

Administrative office
C108 East Hall
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Director, Peggy Houston
(319) 353-3714

An Iowa Consortium of
Regent Universities
Private Colleges and Universities
Community Colleges

June 1980

Dear Friends of ELDERHOSTEL:

Special thanks go out to literally hundreds of people for making this exciting educational experience for persons over age 60 a possibility in Iowa.

To the many, many persons over age 60 who joined us in the fun and who have now become dear new friends -- you went home and told your friends, you wrote us letters which we treasure, you brought your enthusiasm to make the ELDERHOSTEL weeks a success.

To all the personnel at all of the cooperating colleges and universities, your hospitality was unmatched. You, who are the coordinators, the professors, the dorm and dining service workers, the administrators, the other students on campus -- all took an important part in creating a warm learning environment.

To all the people who helped spread the word to those who would be interested -- the editors, reporters and representatives of radio, TV, newspapers, journals, the libraries, agencies on aging, senior centers, service clubs and individual friends -- you did your best.

To those persons and agencies whose dollars helped provide the opportunity -- Title I of the Higher Education Act, the primary source of funds through grants for the first two years; The University of Iowa Foundation; Northwestern Bell Telephone Company; The Iowa Humanities Board and the National Endowment for the Arts; many of the participating colleges whose coffers contributed to the success; the agencies on aging, and organizations and individuals who shared what they have to provide scholarship help for those who could not otherwise come to college -- a big thank you.

Love to the administrative office staff -- the secretaries who each were with us so briefly, Jo Betts, Gloria Schulman, Jenny Keen, Jane Zima, Char Dixon, and especially to Abby Horner, the assistant director. Appreciation goes to Virginia Mather, whose writing and editing skills made this report possible.

It has been an enjoyable experience to me to be a part of ELDERHOSTEL from the time of its early days as the idea from New England began to take root in the fertile soil of Iowa. It has also been a pleasure to have the privilege to serve on the National Board of Directors as the program blossomed into one of national and even international scope. I am looking forward to more years of reaching for new experiences with ELDERHOSTEL.

Sincerely,

Peggy Houston

Peggy Houston, Director
Iowa ELDERHOSTEL

"For the elderly to become suddenly 'used up' is psychologically destructive, physically debilitating, and cruelly wasteful. The overriding objective of ELDERHOSTEL is to stimulate the individual elder to become his own agent of change."

–Martin P. Knowlton, an orginator of the ELDERHOSTEL idea.

ELDERHOSTEL undertakes to provide a mechanism through which elders can reach out for fulfillment and a feeling of personal worth. It is a national network of one-week college-level courses offered in summer on the campuses of universities, colleges, and junior colleges and designed primarily for persons over 60 and their spouses. It grew from an experimental effort by five New Hampshire colleges in the summer of 1975.

The courses are taught, in the main, by regular college faculty and frequently are mini-versions of or segments from courses given during the regular academic terms. However, there are no tests, no outside assignments, and no grades, and there is no credit. Previous knowledge of the subject is not expected, and neither prior college attendance nor high school graduation is required for admission. The only admission factor is age. (And spouses may be under 60.)

Classes meet daily, each for one and a half or two hours. At least three courses are offered in any one week at a college, making possible between 22 and 30 instructional hours in the week. A student may choose to take one, two, or three courses. They are scheduled so as not to conflict with each other.

The name ELDERHOSTEL was selected because the word hostel has long designated a temporary, low-cost shelter for people on the move. It was foreseen that people would travel from campus to campus within a region, or even across the country, to sample the offerings of a variety of colleges and universities—and they have done so.

Moreover, ELDERHOSTEL was meant to imply other kinds of movement—movement into new experiences, reaching for new levels of awareness, discovery of new talents, new interests, new ideas, and new friendships.

Elderhostelers live as a group in the single or double rooms of a college dormitory and eat most of their meals in a general student dining room, where they meet the current college generation, often with results that surprise both generations. Dormitories are chosen with thought to proximity to classes and other campus activities and consideration of access problems associated with the physical handicaps that often come with age.

ELDERHOSTEL participants may attend regular campus social and cultural events such as concerts, operas, plays, exhibits, and general lectures and use campus athletic facilities such as swimming pools and tennis courts. Special evening social and entertainment events also are arranged on many campuses particularly for the hostelers.

IOWA ELDERHOSTEL began in 1977, when a total of 680 individuals attended these specially designed classes on 23 Iowa campuses. In all, there were about 750 registrations—some people attended for more than one week. One woman spent eight weeks in the Iowa hosteling program.

Participating in the program were three Regent universities, three community colleges, and 18 private colleges and universities, forming the largest consortium of institutions of higher learning in the history of Iowa. Iowa had jumped in with both feet.

Twenty-five Iowa colleges and universities offered an aggregate of 30 weeks of classes by 1978, and the state ELDERHOSTEL administration had realized its goal of "having something going on almost all summer." ELDERHOSTEL had spread to include 19 other states, but Iowa still led all states in the number of colleges involved.

A total of 884 persons took advantage of IOWA ELDERHOSTEL classes in the summer of 1978. Approximately 40 percent of this number had come back for more—they had been enrolled in

"To reawaken in participants an awareness of their continuing intellectual vitality . . ."

classes of the program during its first year.

The announcement of plans for IOWA ELDERHOSTEL said that its objective was "to stimulate Iowans to solve personal problems of aging for themselves and to reawaken in participants an awareness of their continuing intellectual vitality and capacity to be productive" and cited the belief that education is the best means of improving one's personal environment.

The program is based on the premises that many elderly minds crave more than TV and bingo and that loneliness and idleness, identified as major problems of the aging, are deadly. The initial statement of IOWA ELDERHOSTEL goals expressed the belief that there is no age limit on expanding the mind and that learning can be fun at any age.

Results show that the designers of the program guessed right about what their elder students would want. The state program has included a great variety of courses, but the ones which have been most popular have been those which offered the most academic "meat." Classes in creative writing, history, and contemporary issues have had high appeal.

Among offerings in the IOWA ELDERHOSTEL program have been "How to Impact Your World Through Legislation," "The Way It Was: Agrarian Life in the Midwest, 1890 to 1915," "Adult Sexuality," "The Middle East: Continuing Crisis." Some of the most popular have been an opera course and several courses in ethnic history.

ELDERHOSTEL's initiators sought to nudge participants back toward the mainstream of life and to avoid providing a padded playpen for the elderly. The goal is not to teach people how to be old. In fact, the courses which have been best received have been those which have disregarded the consideration that the students would be old in years. It appears that what interests the young also interests the old, and that those who come to ELDERHOSTEL are ready, indeed, to reach out. An assortment of courses designed to suggest new hobbies and interests—solar energy and contemporary art, for example—has been successful.

A great deal of "play" accompanies the "work" in the IOWA ELDERHOSTEL program. Extracurricular activities provided for Iowa's elderhostelers have included a wine and cheese welcoming party, disco dancing, picnics, a beer bust, a steak fry, an ice cream social, planetarium and art museum visits, a Mississippi River boat trip, a tour of Old Capitol, and expeditions to the Old Threshers' Reunion and to the Nordic Fest.

IOWA ELDERHOSTEL has proved to be a mixer in several senses of the word. Enrollees have ranged in academic background from persons who never attended high school to those with advanced degrees. A farmer whose formal education ended with the eighth grade went to school with a retired ophthalmologist, and a woman who does housework for a living was in classes with a woman judge. Instructors who, in advance, looked with some dismay at the prospect of tailoring lectures for students with such diverse backgrounds usually have found that 60 or 70 years of experience not only compensated for lack of schooling, but, as it worked out, enriched discussion.

ELDERHOSTEL students have learned they like to mingle with traditional students, and the lat-

I came because I love to learn and be on a college campus. . . . It helps jolt us out of our lethargy . . . A mountain-top experience for me. It opened up avenues for new learning in poetry, religion, and foxfire experiences elsewhere, so when I am alone, I shall love my solitude more.

"The best part was NOT being treated as an elderly person to whom one should show deference, but as a student interested in learning . . . I have a very limited income plus a serious medical problem–and an experience such as this contributed a great deal to my sense of morale and happiness.

ter respond with interest and respect. The ELDERHOSTEL supervisor for one Iowa campus said, "The chemistry between the students and hostelers was marvelous."

An editorial in the July 3, 1978, issue of the *Daily Iowan*, campus newspaper at The University of Iowa, said, in part, "The ELDERHOSTEL is a revival of the highest goal of an intellectual community: men and women educating themselves for the sake of being educated . . . and whoever thought of it deserves congratulations."

The program cuts across economic lines. Typically, more than half of students enrolled for IOWA ELDERHOSTEL have incomes of $12,000 or less and approximately 20 percent have incomes under $6,000. At the other end of the affluence scale, about 5 percent have incomes over $30,000.

ELDERHOSTEL functions as a mixer in the conventional social sense as well. Participants' evaluations have repeatedly mentioned fellowship as one of the best parts of the program and talk of the joys of meeting new people and making new friends. "The best part was the assembling of a group of people in the same age range, bringing their varying personalities and indicating that they want to develop the best that is in them," said one student in looking back at his participation.

Responses by those who have taken ELDERHOSTEL classes have confirmed both the need for such a program and the effectiveness of it. The thrill of intellectual stimulation has been the benefit most frequently mentioned in student evaluations. One such evaluation said the best part was "having my mind blown over and over." Another student said, "I loved every minute of the time I spent in those classes. They made me feel almost young again. Due to health problems, I could not go on trips, etc., but the things I really enjoyed the most were all there."

One of the most touching aspects of the responses has been the expression of pleasure by those for whom it was the first experience of college study. Asked to state the part of ELDERHOSTEL she liked best, one woman said, "Just the whole experience. I have never went to high school." An 83-year-old woman with a tenth-grade education said, "I enjoyed my course, learned much. I hope and pray the hosteler program may continue."

"They ate it up."

The hope that ELDERHOSTEL will continue to be offered and will spread and that the student can return another year for more classes is a persistent theme in evaluations of the program by participants. Here are the ways some of them have put it: "ELDERHOSTEL is like eating popcorn. Once you start, you can't stop."

"A most rare and enlightening experience. I hope to continue attending ELDERHOSTEL in future summers." "My first ELDERHOSTEL. It will not be my last." "My first experience but hopefully not my last. I'll highly recommend the program to others." "I'm sure I sound like a broken record, but if my legs were not so painful, I could keep this up the rest of my life."

from faculty members a half-dozen unsolicited proposals for courses for the next hosteling season. Commenting on the energy and involvement of the hostelers, one campus observer said, "This should be called the Young-at-Heart Convention."

One instructor summed it up: "It turned out to be, for me, exciting teaching . . . Whatever their backgrounds, their knowledge or their attitudes, they all were eager, bright, excited learners. I enjoyed every single one of them. They were considerate, even affectionate, and grateful for the chance to learn. I would say they were a teacher's dream."

I love the chance to learn more. Meet people my own age. I live alone so this is the answer to my loneliness. Next year if I can save enough this winter I will take several.

"I would like to see this program continued in the future—bringing out others that need such experiences." "I hope this idea continues to spread with plentiful grants. Without the grants this great offering will be out of reach for many retired people who live only on social security—and who need this opportunity to study and the social life most."

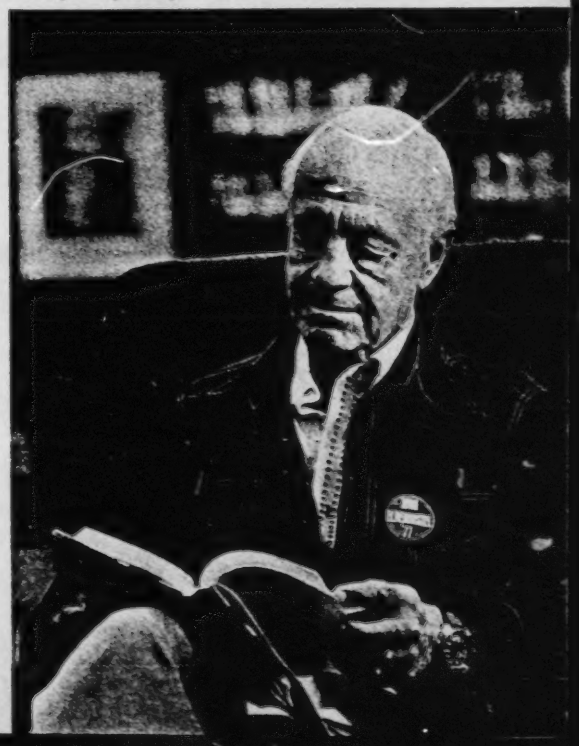
The hostelers have expressed appreciation for the quality of their instruction and instructors. "The instructors understand that it is a process of continuing education and not a condescending gesture to old people." "I like the professors giving us as much as we can take." "Best was the learning experience from classes taught by excellent instructors. Their enthusiasm and concern was very much appreciated."

Instructors, on the other hand, have been delighted with the students. Faculty members have been pleased, and in some cases surprised, at the level of intellectual stimulation attained in ELDERHOSTEL classes. Said one, "They [the hostelers] ate it up." Although there are no assignments in these classes, members of writing classes have presented high quality papers on their own initiative. Heavy use of the library by hostelers has been reported by nearly all institutions of the consortium.

In a recent year the ELDERHOSTEL director on one Iowa campus reported having received

As a public relations event for the cooperating educational institutions, ELDERHOSTEL has had few peers. Wrote Frank A. Downes, assistant dean of Extension and Continuing Education at the University of Northern Iowa, "Some of the evaluations reflected a general change in attitude toward the university and the regular students. Several people expressed surprise at 'the en-

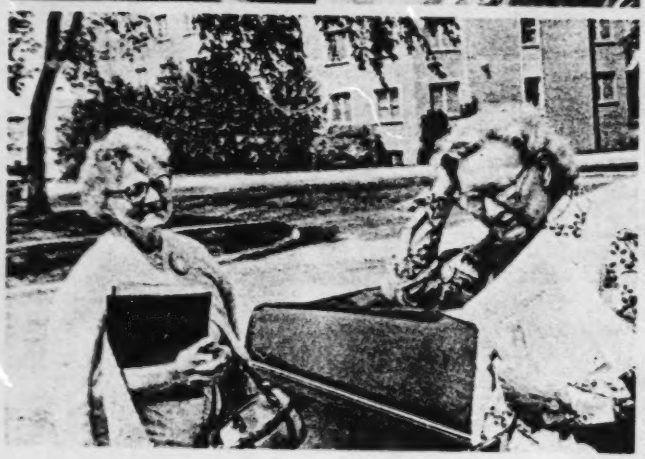
"Heavy use of library."



thusiasm of the teachers' and 'how fortunate our young people are to have such fine teachers.' One participant who admitted that he had thought 'they [university professors] all were atheists and had no morals' said that 'it [the hostel experience] sure gave me a better viewpoint of our state colleges.'"

"The educational advantages, the goodwill, and the positive publicity generated by this program," said Dr. Downes, "are unequaled in recent continuing education activities in Iowa . . . The program will be repeated at UNI with or without outside funding—it was simply that valuable."

The first season of IOWA ELDERHOSTEL was financed in part by a grant of $55,063 obtained by The University of Iowa under Title I of the Higher Education Act. A similar grant was made for 1978. The terms of the grant required the university to coordinate the program throughout the state, publicize the offerings and serve as central booking agent, subcontracting with each participating institution for a one-week session at $1,000. Typically, colleges used the grant money to pay teaching faculty, to provide audiovisual and other teaching materials, and to pay for transportation for field trips. Many persons donated additional services.



I never had a chance to do anything like this before. I never even finished grade school. I had to quit and help the folks.

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Schools which could find the money for instructional costs gave a second, or even a second and third, week of ELDERHOSTEL.

In 1979 Northwestern Bell Telephone Company made a grant for central administration costs of the program. Instructional costs were paid in part by the Iowa Arts Council and the Iowa Board for Public Programs in the Humanities, a state agency of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Iowa Foundation also contributed funds. The following year the Humanities Board funneled to IOWA ELDERHOSTEL financial aid for instructional expenses of courses included in a "Cultural Festival" offering studies in this country's and Iowa's ethnic heritage.

During the first two years of IOWA ELDERHOSTEL, a charge of $65 for each Sunday-to-Saturday hosteling week was made to the hosteler to cover room, board, and some entertainment. As the program moved toward economic self-sufficiency, this fee was raised in 1979 to $115 and the next year to $130, the figure agreed upon nationally as a maximum.

Some "hostelships," or scholarships, are available to help pay the room and board charge. They are funded by service clubs, agencies on aging and other sources, including individuals, among them a number of hostelers. One hosteler, who said she came to campus with a suitcase full of pills and forgot to take them, sent a room-and-board check so "somebody else can have the same opportunity."

Photo by Gloria Schulman

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"Men and women educating themselves for the sake of being educated."

One couple who had sent five children to college got an ELDERHOSTEL week as a present from their children and took "Contemporary Art," something which had been on the mother's always-wanted-to-do list for a long time. A daughter commented, "That'll be something they won't have to find room for. They can store it in their memories."

It is possible for a person living in the vicinity of a consortium institution to sign up as a commuter. However, commuting is discouraged and quotas for commuters are set because it is felt that much of the value of the ELDERHOSTEL experience is lost if the student does not live in the dormitory and is not on the campus for evening activities. One hosteler has said that a big part of the fun was "going away and feeling like a college student."

Peggy Houston, ELDERHOSTEL project director for Iowa, says, "We advise registrants not to try to stay home and commute to classes. We hope they will relax in campus hospitality for the week so they can take full advantage of opportunities to make new friends and absorb new ideas."

She suggests that instead of enrolling for whatever courses are handiest, the student reach for what interests him or her most and go where it is offered.

Nationally, ELDERHOSTEL has been incorporated as a nonprofit educational program. It is administered by an executive office and a board of directors in consultation with representatives of the state directors and college coordinators. The national headquarters is at 100 Boylston St., Suite 200, Boston, Massachusetts 02116. The name ELDERHOSTEL has been trademarked and its use is permitted only for programs affiliated through the national office and complying with national guidelines.

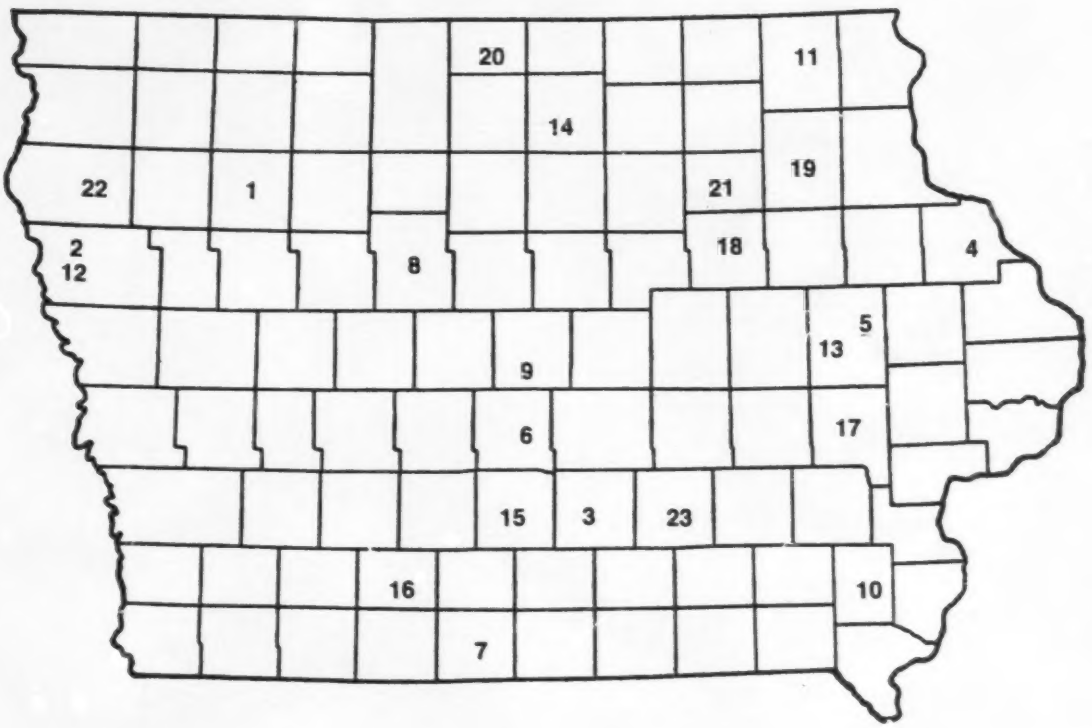
For further information concerning IOWA ELDERHOSTEL, write or phone:

Peggy Houston
Division of Continuing Education
C108 East Hall
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
(319) 353-3714

Maps and Tables

IOWA ELDERHOSTEL Institutions

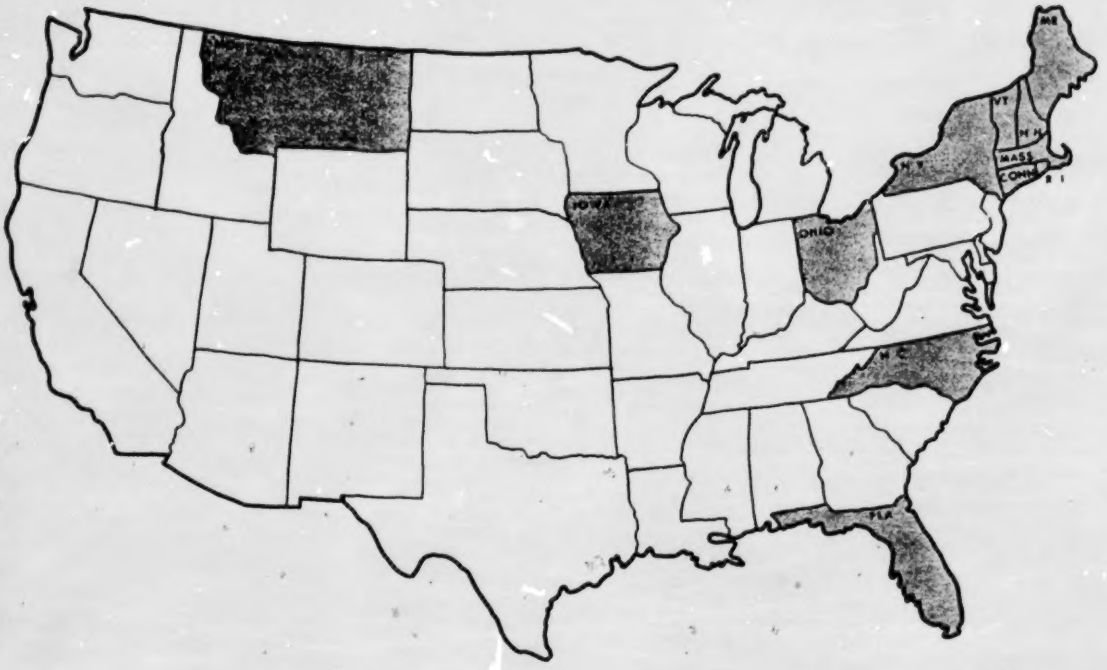
The map below shows the locations of the Iowa colleges and universities which have offered IOWA ELDERHOSTEL classes.



1. Buena Vista College, Storm Lake
2. Briar Cliff College, Sioux City
3. Central College, Pella
4. Clarke College, Loras College, University of Dubuque, all at Dubuque.
5. Cornell College, Mount Vernon
6. Drake University, Des Moines
7. Graceland College, Lamoni
8. Iowa Central Community College, Fort Dodge
9. Iowa State University, Ames
10. Iowa Wesleyan College, Mount Pleasant
11. Luther College, Decorah
12. Morningside College, Sioux City
13. Mount Mercy College, Cedar Rapids
14. North Iowa Area Community College, Mason City
15. Simpson College, Indianola
16. Southwestern Community College, Creston
17. The University of Iowa, Iowa City
18. University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls
19. Upper Iowa University, Fayette
20. Waldorf College, Forest City
21. Wartburg College, Waverly
22. Westmar College, Le Mars
23. William Penn College, Oskaloosa

Iowa's First ELDERHOSTEL YEAR

The map below shows the states which participated in ELDERHOSTEL in 1977, the year Iowa joined the program. There were 12 in all, and Iowa was one of two west of the Mississippi.



Profile, IOWA ELDERHOSTEL Participants

Residence—More than 80% of participants are Iowans.
Age—Average, 68
Sex—Approximately three-fourths are female.
Employment Status—More than 80% have been retired—for an average of nearly 7 years.

Approximately 80% have spent most of their lives in the state where they currently reside.

Income Levels *
19%—*under $6,000*
43%—$6,000-$12,000
24%—$12,000-$20,000
8%—$20,000-$30,000
5%—over $30,000

Education Completed *
3.2%—elementary school
13.6%—high school
30.6%—some college
26.8%—college with degree
25.8%—attended graduate/professional school

Marital Status *
16%—Single
44%—Married
40%—Widowed

*(In a Sample of 483)

ELDERHOSTEL is the best thing that could be planned for our generation of elders. It gives us an opportunity for continuing education in a very interesting way. It gives us new interests and an opportunity to meet new people with similar interests.

It gives mental and spiritual stimulation which our small town does not give me.

The best part (of ELDERHOSTEL)–enlarging my circle of friends and having mind-stimulating classes.

I enjoyed ELDERHOSTEL enormously and it did me a great deal of good at a time when I was fighting depression and was about to lose the battle.

I needed some stimulation in personal growth. It was beyond my expectations.

Best part—meeting new people, opening up and airing out the brain cells, exchanging ideas with other students and professors.

This week of ELDERHOSTEL immediately followed my retirement—makes me aware of possibilities for the future.

My only regret—the week passed too quickly.

I came to ELDERHOSTEL to open a door I had almost closed intellectually.

When one has been involved almost exclusively in one field for most of adult life, ELDERHOSTEL helps show the way to diversity.

ELDERHOSTELS have been some of my happiest reasons for living.

It was a super experience. Loved it! This was my first ELDERHOSTEL, but not my last. An inspiring group to invest a week of time and shared experience with. I really can't think of any better way to have started "the first day of the rest of my life."

So much more exciting than I anticipated . . . I decided to come to keep from dying by inches from boredom. It has been a very full, enjoyable, and enlightening week.

I feel 10 years younger now . . . It has been such a superb week, I can't really choose any separate best thing . . . My horizons are broadened.

Don't pack your dreams away. You can do anything you want if you care enough . . . It gave me insights into my potential for growth even though I am elderly in years.

We are going home tired but happy . . . An opportunity to change a humdrum existence.

One man from our town took an ELDERHOSTEL course and liked it so much that he signed up for a semester of further study.

My mind sparkled for weeks afterwards . . . ELDERHOSTEL revitalizes . . . I am 84 years old and felt all of that when I started. I lost 10 or 15 years . . . makes us feel part of the now again.

ELDERHOSTEL Growth, Nationally

By 1980 ELDERHOSTEL classes were available in all 50 states and two provinces of Canada. The table below demonstrates how ELDERHOSTEL spread during the five years after its inception. The figures in columns show the numbers of colleges and universities in each state which participated in the indicated year. The total at the bottom of each column shows the aggregate number of colleges and universities which conducted ELDERHOSTEL programs in that year.

	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
New Hampshire	5	6	7	5	5	4
Connecticut		5	1	3	4	5
Maine		3	2	4	6	9
Massachusetts		4	10	8	10	9
Rhode Island		1	1	1	1	2
Vermont		2	2	3	3	4
		21				
Florida			1	3	4	3
Iowa			23	25	23	21
Montana			1	4	3	3
New York			1	7	13	18
North Carolina			10	10	9	12
Ohio			1	4	8	7
			60			
Michigan				1	6	4
Minnesota				18	19	20
Oregon				1	3	5
Pennsylvania				15	19	19
Texas				1	1	8
Washington				4	4	5
West Virginia				8	7	6
Wisconsin				5	12	14
				130		
Alabama					5	5
Arizona					4	5
California					10	12
Colorado					9	7
Georgia					3	7
Idaho					1	1
Illinois					9	9
Indiana					11	7
Maryland					3	6
Mississippi					1	4
Missouri					8	8
Nebraska					2	3
South Dakota					1	4
Tennessee					2	6
Utah					2	1
Virginia					2	8
Wyoming					1	1
					235	

"fellowship"

Alaska	3
Arkansas	2
Delaware	1
Hawaii	3
Kansas	6
Kentucky	7
Louisiana	2
Nevada	1
New Jersey	1
New Mexico	2
North Dakota	4
Oklahoma	4
South Carolina	1
Canada	
New Brunswick	1
Ontario	4
	314

I came to ELDERHOSTEL because when you stop learning, you stop living . . . and I ain't ready yet.

I came because I like to progress.

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Trust Your Parents

(Editor's note: While Rick Morain is on vacation, his brother Tom is taking over editor's duties. Through the year, Tom teaches history at Iowa State University in Ames.)

My parents are going to college.

Under a program called ELDERHOSTEL, Iowa colleges and universities are offering one-week opportunities for Iowa senior citizens to take some special courses during the summer session. The week-long classes vary from campus to campus but cover a wide variety of topics—the future of democratic institutions, how to do your own genealogy, alternative energy sources for the future, ceramics, music appreciation, Iowa's Old Order Amish.

Students will sleep in the dormitories, eat in the food service cafeterias, and use the recreational facilities of the college. Mom and Dad are at Luther College in Decorah.

The ELDERHOSTEL program is great, but I'm a little anxious nevertheless. I've never had college-kid parents before, and while some of my concerns are silly, we can't help worrying about them anyway.

Should we let them have a car for the week they are there, or will it interfere with their studies?

If they send their laundry home in the middle of the week, should we wash it and send it back or teach them that they have to learn to be responsible for their own things?

All the Elderhostel students will be in the same coed dorm for the week. Need we remind them of the dangers of proximity or do we rely on the example we have set at home? Is there anything we could tell them now that would help?

How often should we accept collect calls home? Of course we want to hear from them, but would it be rude to send a roll of stamps if they call too often?

If Mom takes up electric guitar and Dad brings home a set of drums, must we endure their practice sessions in the house? Do we all have to listen to acid Welk?

If they seem to have more spending money than we think they went to school with, do we ask them where they are getting it? After all, it's hard to think of Mother as a pusher, but how are children supposed to know these days?

Should we insist that the college send home their grades at midweek?

Would they be embarrassed if we visited them and asked to meet their friends?

How do you suggest to them nicely that just because they are going to college, they don't have to dress like bums? What if Mom wants to wear jeans to church next Sunday? What if Dad insists on fringing his ties? What, heaven forbid, if they start popping their gum when they talk?

Probably we're worrying needlessly. Most parents who go to college are clean, responsible, and wholesome people who will be credits to their children and communities. But being a son or daughter in a rapidly changing world is a rough assignment. We want the most for our parents but realize that we can't give them everything. We shall continue to love them—and hope for the best.

—T.M.

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"The growing interest that colleges are showing in opening their doors to people traditionally considered too old to go to school is a welcome recognition that universities are a valuable resource for the whole society, and not just a training ground for young adults."

Des Moines Register editorial
June 4, 1977